

The Dominion Iron & Steel and Dominion Coal Companies.

The Dominion Iron & Steel Company and the Dominion Coal Company have not yet settled their differences. The public naturally expect that the prominent gentlemen identified with both companies will be able to find a solution of the problem. The directors have in their ranks, some of Canada's ablest financiers and surely they must appreciate the injurious effect upon Canada, of the condition of affairs which now exists. It is to be hoped that the directors of neither company are so unreasonable that they will not have arbitration, or meet the situation prepared to do what is fair and reasonable even if one side or the other does consider that it has the worst or best of the bargain, for friction cannot but retard the progress of both. Notwithstanding reports to the contrary, it is but reasonable to believe, that both the Dominion and Provincial authorities would take an interest in having this question settled.

Since writing the above, a meeting of the directors of the two companies has been held at the Windsor Hotel, the Hon. Mr. Fielding being present. It is stated that there is every prospect of an amicable arrangement being arrived at within a few days.

CANADIAN LIFE UNDERWRITERS' ASSOCIATION.

On the 4th instant, members of the Montreal Life Underwriters' Association combined business with pleasure in a supper at the Elk's Club.

Mr. A. Homer Vipond, president of the Association, in the chair. Amongst those present were Messrs. G. Herbert Simpson, manager at Montreal (North American Life); R. M. Griffith, manager (State Life); J. P. Daly (Excelsior Life); A. Germain (Royal); C. J. Alloway (London & Lancashire Life); J. F. Stratton (Equitable Life); G. E. Williams (New York Life), and about thirty others.

The Chairman summarized the accomplishment of the Association in optimistic vein. He emphasized, with obvious approval, the improvement of feeling among life agents, an achievement which alone justified its existence.

Mr. E. Schmidt, manager Canada Life at Montreal and a delegate to the National Association Convention held recently at St. Louis, was called upon for an account of the proceedings. The keynote of the convention, said Mr. Schmidt, was "the greatest good to the business as a whole." The warmth of the reception of the Canadian delegation was evidenced by the selection of Toronto as the next meeting place of the National Association. President Scovel eloquently dwelt upon the lively enterprise of the Canadians.

Mr. G. F. Johnston, supervisor of the New York Life, appreciated both the difficulty of the task, and the success with which Mr. Schmidt had outlined the convention proceedings.

Mr. J. F. Desmarais spoke to the question of the desirability of incorporation for disciplinary and other useful purposes.

Mr. Thos. J. Parkes presented the report of the proceedings of the Association before the Royal Commission at Ottawa. He believed that they had created a very favourable impression despite the reports of the daily press.

THE GAS AND ELECTRIC PROBLEM.

The Gas and Electric Light question has been held up for another week to enable a delegation of Montreal aldermen to go to Ottawa, to interview the Premier, with reference to a scheme for the city leasing from the Government the water power of the Beauharnois Canal. In no business circles outside of the City Council is this scheme likely to be regarded as a practical solution of the gas and electric light question. The Montreal Light, Heat & Power Company has a perpetual charter and is here to stay. It is in possession of the streets and of numerous contracts, the number of which would be greatly increased at the first sign of opposition. In what kind of position would a civic plant, under civic management and with the mere 10,000 horse power of the Beauharnois Canal as the source of its current be in to compete with such a powerful organization as the company in possession?

A fair bargain by which the city's and the consumer's interests would be protected, and by which the roads and sidewalks of Montreal could be put in good condition, can, we are convinced, be made within a week, if the subject is handled on business principles. The old company is not one of the kind that would rather die than fight, and an opposition which has to run the gauntlet of private bills committees in Ottawa and Quebec, of two Houses of Parliament and two of the Legislature, to say nothing of the City Council and its committees has lots of trouble ahead.

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The City of Montreal is entitled to receive remuneration for franchises or special privileges granted by it. The citizens are entitled to gas and electric light and power at reasonable cost.

What is the best means of its accomplishing the above?

Is it by promoting or encouraging new companies to enter the field; is it by the city itself entering into the business, or is it by dallying with the question and playing to the gallery until it be too late to make a fair business workable arrangement?